

Information Item

Governmental Relations Committee

Update on the Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund

This report highlights recent activities at the federal level relating to the new *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund* which replaces the former Eisenhower Professional Development Program.

On July 8, the Commission had made available under the new Fund \$8.2 million to provide grants to colleges and universities in partnerships with local schools to provide training to K-12 teachers in subject matter content.

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Update on the Federal Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund

Introduction

Under the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, Congress and President Bush enacted House Bill 1 in December 2001 as the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*.

The NCLB Act continues federal support to states and local educational agencies (LEAs) to assist in improving the subject matter knowledge of the nation's current and prospective K-12 teaching profession. As anticipated, the newly reauthorized program retains an important role for state higher education agencies such as the California Postsecondary Education Commission to continue to partner with local schools to improve teacher and student learning and achievement. To carry out activities under House Bill 1, the Commission will have available for grants \$8.2 million beginning July 1, 2002.

The Commission has administered three major federal initiatives

The California Postsecondary Education Commission, as the designated State agency for higher education (SAHE), has administered three of the previous major federal initiatives under ESEA for the federal professional development activities.

The first of these programs program was funded under the Education for Economic Security Act of 1985 with a focus on mathematics, science, and foreign languages. That program was reauthorized in 1989 as the Eisenhower Professional Development State Grant Program with a focus solely on mathematics and science. The Eisenhower Program was continued under the reauthorized ESEA as the Improving America's School Act (IASA) of 1992 and, again, retained a focus on mathematics and science. In 1994, however, the Eisenhower Program was expanded beyond mathematics and science to include the subjects of arts, history, government and civics, economics, English, reading, and foreign languages.

\$42 million in grants

Under these programs, between 1985 and 2001, the Postsecondary Education Commission has awarded 140 grants to California institutions of higher education and non-profit agencies totaling approximately \$42 million with awardees matching funds of approximately \$13 million. In addition, approximately 35,000 K-12 prospective and current teachers and principals have received subject matter, standards-based training. Under the most recent Eisenhower grant competition (completed in October 2001), the Commission made 26 multi-year awards were made. The

Commission anticipates being able to continue these projects under the new legislation.

As noted in prior Commission agenda federal updates, the Elementary and Secondary School Act was originally slated for reauthorization in 1999. From then until December 2001, Commission staff provided reports on the progress being made by Congress and the Administration to specifically reauthorize the professional development (teacher quality) component.

**The new Teacher
and Principal
Quality Training
Recruitment Fund**

The Commission will receive approximately \$8.2 million to carry-out activities under House Bill I which are contained in Title II, Part A as the *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund*. The new fund spells out that the “state agency for higher education” will, through its competitive grant process, provide the following:

1. Professional development activities in core academic subjects to ensure that:
 - a. Teachers and highly qualified paraprofessionals (and, when appropriate, principals) have subject matter knowledge in the academic subjects that the teachers teach (including knowledge of how to use computers and other technology to enhance student learning); and
 - b. Principals have the instructional leadership skills to help them work more effectively with teachers to help students master core academic subjects.
2. Assist local educational agencies (LEAs) and their teachers, highly qualified paraprofessionals, or school principals, in providing sustained, high-quality professional development activities that:
 - a. Ensure that those individuals can use challenging State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and State assessments to improve instructional practices and student academic achievement; and
 - b. May include intensive programs designed to prepare individuals to provide instruction related to the professional development described in the preceding paragraph to others in their schools.

*Important changes;
clarification sought*

While the basic tenets and goals of the teacher quality program under the new *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund* are similar to previous initiatives, there are changes that will have a significant impact on how the Commission will design and implement the new program and, to the extent possible, preserve those projects recently funded.

In light of the fact that the federal U.S. Department of Education is still involved in its rule-making process for the *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund*, the Commission (as have its counterparts in other states) has requested clarification from federal authorities with respect to:

- ♦ A definition of “eligible partners” and the entity that may receive a grant.

The Act provides that the SAHE will award grants to “... a private or state institution of higher education and the division of the institution that prepares teachers and principals; a school of arts and science; and a high-need local education agency (LEA).” The language, however, goes on further to state that “...an eligible partnership also may include another LEA, a public charter school, an elementary school or secondary school, an educational service agency, a nonprofit educational organization, another IHE, a school of arts and sciences within that IHE, the division of that IHE that prepares teachers and principals, a nonprofit cultural organization, an entity carrying out a pre-kindergarten program, a teacher organization, a principal organization, or a business.”

Although this language appears all-encompassing, staff has questions about whether this language will preclude the Commission from making awards to California Community Colleges as the primary service provider and, as a consequence, the grant recipient.

- ♦ How states, as specified in the law, will be restricted to providing services only to “highly qualified teachers” given the explicit goal of the *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund* to give priority to teachers not teaching in their fields and whom, most likely, teach in schools designated as “low-performing.”
- ♦ How states, under a competitive awarding process, will ensure that “...all geographic areas of a state” are served.
- ♦ How the SAHE will prohibit any one partner under the grant to receive “more than 50%” of the funds given the fact that, as is now the practice, the bulk of the grant funds go directly to schools and teachers to support stipends, substitute teacher costs, materials and supplies, which typically are in excess of 50% of the total award amount.

In addition, the *No Child Left Behind Act* requires that each state develop program outcome plans with annual measurable objectives that will ensure that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. The Commission is also awaiting clarification on these requirements before proceeding to develop a request for proposals (RFP) and data collection instruments for the new *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund*.

Continued updates Commission staff will provide an update on the progress of the federal rule-making and a timeline for the Commission to begin its implementing of the new *Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruitment Fund*. Finally, staff will provide an update on the status of the Commission’s budget with regard to the \$420,000 allocation that the federal government will provide to the Commission to administer the Fund.
